

Please reconsider the claims in light of the amendments and arguments set forth below.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 11 and 12.

Please amend claim 1 as follows.

1.(AMENDED) A fluid absorbent article for surgical applications comprising:

a top layer including an apertured film having a plurality of apertures formed therein, each aperture including a base and an apex with the aperture base oriented in an upper surface of the top layer and the apex positioned a depth below the base and upper surface;

A¹ an absorbent layer including an absorbent media positioned to underlie the top layer generally coextensive with the top layer and receive fluids passing through the top layer, the absorbent media operable for dispersing and containing the fluid within the article;

bases of the apertures having a plurality of generally straight sides and positioned with respect to the upper surface to present a plurality of different angles to fluid flowing on the upper surface to hinder and divert the fluid so that it more readily passes through the apertures to the absorbent layer;

a plurality of the apertures having a pentagonal shaped base and being arranged in hexagonal groupings;

a bonding layer including a bonding media positioned between the top layer and absorbent layer and operable for bonding the apices of the apertures to the absorbent media generally over the length and width of those layers, to secure the layers together generally over the length and width of the fluid absorbent article while generally maintaining the depths of the apertures of the top layer.